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TELEVISION. ADRIEN BRODY WORKS HIS MAGIC

THE OSCAR-WINNER BECOMES HOUDINI. PAGE 28

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Weekend, August 28-September 1, 2014 www.metro.us | t: MetroNewYork | f: MetroNewYork

Let's get serious. Summer's over and now the movies are less frivolous — but also better. Inside we highlight the sure bets (as well as the sequels, reboots, rehashes and comic book movies you'll probably go see anyway). PAGES 16-18

20 MOVIES TO SEE THIS FALL

These leading men are ready to buckle down now that summer's gone.

A brute force wind is shaking the art scene

PAGE 29

Roster spots on the line in Giants, Jets finales

PAGE 39

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1 NEWS

Today's tweet

"According to Friends and Seinfeld, all white people in New York City live in amazing apartments & don't really need steady employment."
@adamrensch

To our readers

No paper Monday, but Friday editions return

In observance of the Labor Day holiday, Metro will not publish on Monday, but we will resume our regular publishing schedule on Tuesday. That means Metro will be available Monday through Friday throughout the rest of the year. As you enjoy the official end of summer this weekend, be sure to keep up with all the latest in news, sports, entertainment and everything else you need to know at www.metro.us.

Marshals, police arrest fugitive after shootout

Queens. A joint operation between the NYPD and U.S. Marshals erupted in gunfire.

Federal authorities arrested a fugitive hiding out in Queens after he shot at U.S. Marshals and officers with the New York City Police Department.

Oswald Alexander Lewis, Jr., 44, was in custody Wednesday afternoon after a confrontation with arresting officers who found the suspect in a Springfield Gardens home near the intersection of 175th Street and 144th Drive.

The arresting officers busted in the home's front door at around 11 p.m. Tuesday after Lewis refused to open the door, only to be met with gunfire coming from the bedroom. Cops said Lewis had apparently gone to sleep with a bulletproof vest and two handguns at his side. After setting off a few rounds, the cops fired back and injured Lewis' hand.

Oswald Alexander Lewis / DEA

In a failed attempt to escape, Lewis dove out the back door toward the backyard, where he was met by NYPD officers. He ran back inside and began shooting again until he emptied out both guns.

Trapped and injured, officials said he threw both guns to the ground and soon surrendered.

No authorities were injured in the violent arrest, but Lewis was taken to Jamaica Hospital for treatment.

Tuesday night's arrest is the second recent joint operation between Marshals and NYPD to end in a shootout.

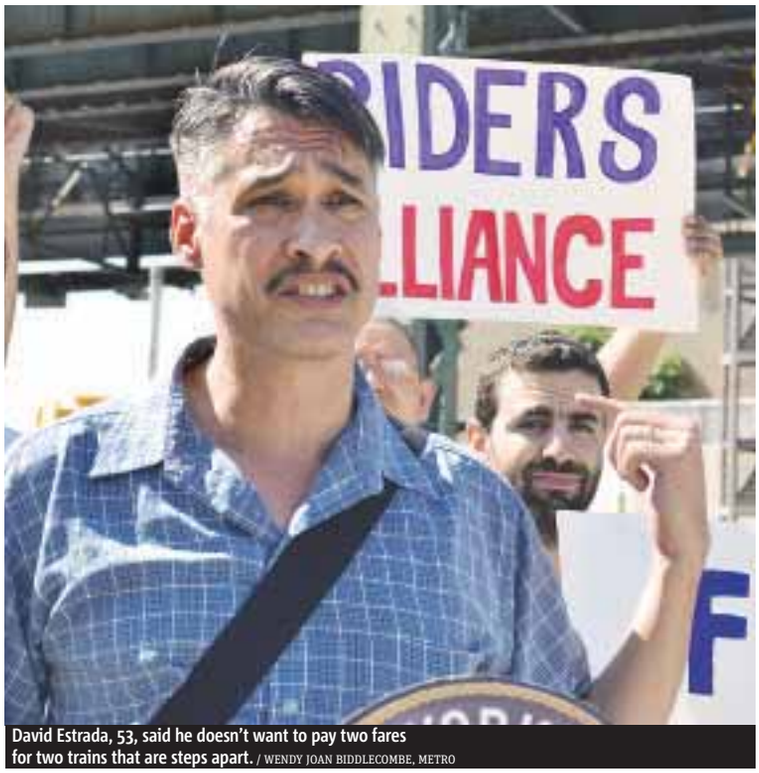
In late July, two Marshals and a detective were hospitalized when they approached a fugitive in a West Village smoke shop who died in the crossfire.

Checkered past

Local officers joined the Marshals when they busted in on Lewis at around 11 p.m. Tuesday.

- On the run for possession, smuggling and distribution of cocaine charges from 1991, Lewis refused to step out of the house after arresting officers broke down his door.

CHESTER SORIA
@chestersoria
chester.soria@metro.us



David Estrada, 53, said he doesn't want to pay two fares for two trains that are steps apart. / WENDY JOAN BIDDLECOMBE, METRO

Brooklyn. G train riders want fair fares

Subway riders and activists called on the MTA Wednesday to continue to offer riders a free transfer between the Broadway G train and the Lorimer stop of the J and M trains.

The MTA began offering the transfer five weeks ago when construction on the train's tunnel closed the Greenpoint Avenue stop in Brooklyn, and the 21st Street and Court Square stops in Queens.

"Let's take a good thing and make it last longer," state Senator Daniel Squadron said.

A 2013 review by the MTA found 2,300 people made the transfer between the G and J and M trains daily, even though they have to pay the additional transfer fare for trains that stop on the same block, according to John Raskin, executive director of Riders Alliance.

"That's the issue at heart here, helping people who are transferring from the G to the J and M or vice versa not pay twice for one subway trip," Raskin said.

Subway rider David Estrada agreed.

"I don't want a free transfer," Estrada, 53, said. I don't want anything I wouldn't get otherwise."

WENDY JOAN BIDDLECOMBE

Visit **Metro.us** to keep up with transportation news in NYC.

New York City

Bratton defends 'broken windows' as NYPD support dips in poll

A majority of New Yorkers support the New York Police Department's efforts to prevent major crimes by targeting lower-level offenses even as support of the department hit a new low, a new poll revealed.

Sixty percent of those polled by Quinnipiac University said they support the "broken windows" theory popularized by Commissioner Bill Bratton since his first term in the 1990s.

Support for the policing that targets quality of life offenses is broad: 61 percent of white, 56 percent of black and 64 percent of Hispanic New Yorkers polled all support the principles behind the theory.

Bratton said he was gratified but not surprised by support of the NYPD's initiatives.

According to the poll, 50 percent of New Yorkers polled approve of the department, a dip from last month's 59 percent and the lowest rating in 14 years. The poll has measured a decline in approval since May. CHESTER JESUS SORIA

William Bratton
GETTY IMAGES

TONIGHT'S CBS PRIMETIME LINEUP IS ON
WLNY 10 55
TWO AND A HALF MEN
8:00PM
The Millers
8:30PM
BIG BROTHER
9:00PM
ELEMENTARY
10:00PM
DUE TO NY JETS PRESEASON FOOTBALL ON CBS 2

Artists find a well-rounded canvas

The Water Tank Project will wrap over 100 water tanks around New York City with art by new and established artists through the end of October 2014. The goal of the project is to raise awareness about water usage and the environment. / GETTY IMAGES

Inwood

Fake cabbie assaults woman with kids in car

Cops are on the lookout for a taxi driver suspected of trying to sexually assault a female passenger while her three kids were in the car.

Authorities said the suspect picked up the woman and her children in Inwood on Aug. 24 at 2:45 a.m. after telling her he was a cab driver. The 26-year-old woman asked to be taken to Queens.

Once the car was parked, police said the driver tried to sexually assault the woman.

The woman struggled to escape with her kids but the assailant pushed back, before finally fleeing.

CHESTER JESUS SORIA

NYC. Time Warner suffers huge outage; state launches probe

Time Warner Cable suffered a massive network outage on Wednesday due to suspected human error that cut Internet services to 11 million businesses and residences, prompting a state investigation.

The outage to its Internet customers across 29 states began at 4:30 a.m., said company spokesman Bobby Amirshahi. Services were "largely restored" by 6 a.m and "a majority, if not all" were back online as of 8 a.m., he said.

The company said it was investigating the cause of Wednesday's disruption, which occurred as technicians conducted routine network maintenance.

"We believe it to be human error that occurred during a routine overnight maintenance window," Amirshahi said.

The outage affected 2 percent of all U.S. Internet networks, according to Renesys, a firm that monitors Internet activity.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo ordered the state's Department of Public Service to investigate the disruption.

"Dependable Internet service is a vital link in our daily lives and telecommunications companies have a responsibility to deliver reliable service to their customers," Cuomo said.

REUTERS

Critical time

The outage came at a critical time for Time Warner, which is working to win FCC approval of a $45 billion proposed merger with Comcast Corp, the largest U.S. cable provider.

- Experts say that customers are frustrated by the frequency and handling of previously disclosed service disruptions.

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MTA transit changes coming for long holiday weekend

New York City. Extra service will be added and some lines will see changes.

The MTA is adding additional service Friday for New Yorkers getting out of the city for the long weekend.

On Friday, 27 additional Metro-North and LIRR trains will be running in the early afternoon out of the city. On Monday, Metro-North will operate on a Sunday schedule, and the LIRR runs on a Sunday/holiday schedule.

MTA New York City Transit subways and buses and the MTA Bus Company will run on a Sunday schedule on Labor Day.

There are also service changes in Brooklyn for the J'Ouvert and West Indian-American Day parades.

From 11 p.m. Sunday to 4 a.m. Monday, the Church Avenue stop on the 2 train will be bypassed, and area buses will be re-routed.

Subway entrances along the Eastern Parkway route may be affected from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday, certain subway entrances in the parade area will be affected and buses in the area will be rerouted. The Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum 2, 3 and 4 stop will be closed from 12-7 p.m.

The Staten Island Railway is also running extra trains between 2:30-7:50 p.m. Friday, with one express train and local training waiting for every ferry. The SIR operates on a Sunday schedule on Labor Day.

Construction on bridges and tunnels will be suspended Friday afternoon through rush hour on Sept. 2, with the exception of the Bronx-Whitestone Bridge to help those trying to get in and out of the city for the holiday.

Some service will be disrupted at Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn where the West Indian Day parade takes place Sept. 1. / GETTY IMAGES

Added trains

27

The number of additional early afternoon trains from Manhattan on Friday being provided by the LIRR and Metro-North.

Check online

You can check up on late-breaking changes to public transportation and get updates online at MTA.info.

WENDY JOAN BIDDLECOMBE
Wendy.Biddlecombe@metro.us

Randall's Island

FDNY debuts fire simulator

The New York City Fire Department christened its newest, custom-built simulator at its training academy on Randall's Island on Tuesday.

Designed to replicate fires aboard seafaring vessels, the four-story, 132-foot-long ship recreates electrical and kitchen fires at sea.

"In a city with 520 miles of coastline — and highly active shipping and tourism industries — the possibility of shipboard fires is real and present, making this simulator an incredibly important training tool for our members and the entire region," Fire Commissioner Daniel Nigro said. METRO

The simulator / FDNY, FLICKR

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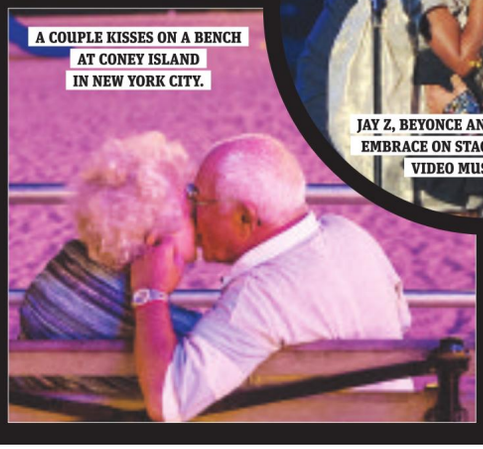
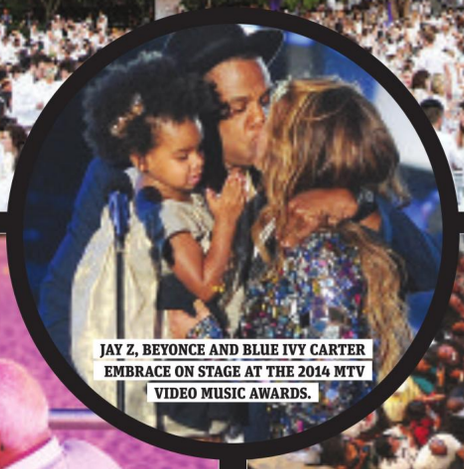
ABOUT 5,000 PEOPLE ATTEND DINER EN BLANC, A POP-UP DINNER HELD ONCE A YEAR IN NEW YORK CITY. / GETTY IMAGES

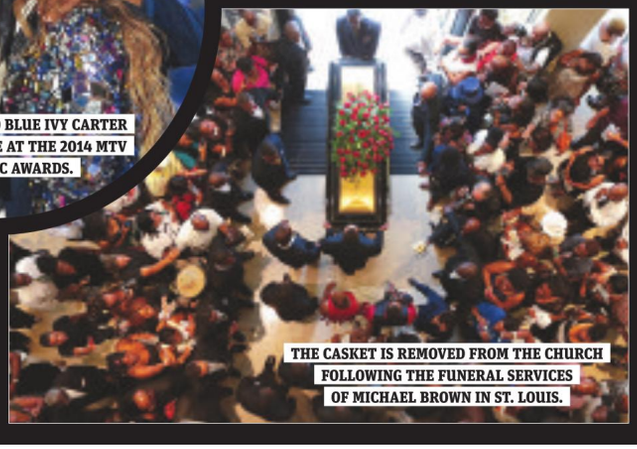
SARAH SILVERMAN POSES IN THE PRESS ROOM AT THE EMMY AWARDS.



A COUPLE KISSES ON A BENCH AT CONEY ISLAND IN NEW YORK CITY.



JAY Z, BEYONCE AND BLUE IVY CARTER EMBRACE ON STAGE AT THE 2014 MTV VIDEO MUSIC AWARDS.



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THE WEEK IN PHOTOS

We round up the week's best photography from around the globe.

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American writer Curtis is thankful for his release

Hostage. Curtis thanked the government of Qatar and U.S. officials for working to free him.

A U.S. writer freed this week after being held captive for two years by Syrian insurgents on Wednesday thanked those who had worked for his release and said he was emotionally overwhelmed by his welcome home.

Peter Theo Curtis, who was held by Nusra Front, al Qaeda's official wing in Syria, said he had no idea while he was imprisoned that there had been hundreds of people around the world pushing for his release.

"I am just overwhelmed with emotion," Curtis, 45, told reporters outside his mother's home Wednesday morning.

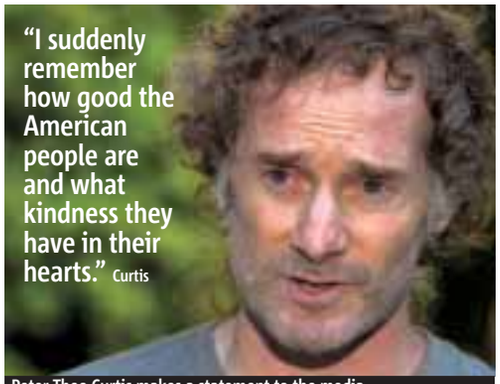
Curtis, who was freed on Sunday, said numerous strangers had approached him to welcome him back to the United States.

He declined to answer questions. "I will respond, but I can't do it now," said Curtis, who along with his mother Nancy Curtis raised a U.S. flag at the home before he spoke to reporters.

Curtis arrived in the United States late on Tuesday after a flight from Tel Aviv, meeting his mother at Boston's Logan Airport.

His release comes against the backdrop of other efforts to free other U.S. hostages in Syria as the United States considers possible options, including air strikes, to target the Islamic State organization.

Curtis' ex-girlfriend, Jennifer Steil, said he spoke Arabic fluently and understood the Koran, rare attributes among Westerners who traveled to the region. **REUTERS**



Peter Theo Curtis makes a statement to the media down the street from his family's home. / GETTY IMAGES

Social media

ISIS executes soldiers, takes hostages at Syria base

Islamic State militants have executed Syrian army soldiers and are holding a group hostage after capturing an air base in northeast Syria over the weekend, pictures posted on social media by supporters showed on Wednesday.

Islamic State, an offshoot of al Qaeda, stormed Tabqa air base near Raqqa city on Sunday after days of fighting with the army that cost more than 500 lives, according to monitoring group the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

Tabqa was the army's last foothold in an area otherwise controlled by the militants. **REUTERS**

Captive. Mother pleads to Islamic State leader for her son's freedom

The mother of an American journalist held captive by militant group Islamic State released a video on Wednesday appealing directly to the group's leader for his release.

"I am sending this message to you, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi al-Quraishi al-Hussaini, the caliph of the Islamic State. I am Shirley Sotloff. My son Steven is in your hands," Sotloff said in the video.

Sotloff, 31, went missing in Syria last year. He was seen in a video released by Islamic State last week showing the decapitation of fellow journalist James Foley. **REUTERS**

SOTLOFF TALKS TO LIBYAN REBELS ON THE AL DAFNIYA FRONT LINE, ON JUNE 2, 2011, IN MISRATA, LIBYA. /GETTY IMAGES

Quoted

"I ask you to use your authority to spare his life and to follow the example set by the Prophet Mohammed, who protected people of The Book." Shirley Sotloff

Legal. Miley Cyrus' awards date wanted on probation violation

Miley Cyrus took Jesse Helt to the MTV Video Awards at The Forum in Inglewood, California. / GETTY IMAGES

The young homeless man who accepted Miley Cyrus' MTV Music Video Award has a warrant for his arrest in Oregon on a probation violation, his probation officer said this week.

Lee Warren, the Polk County probation officer of 22-year-old Jesse Helt, said local authorities were unsuccessful in finding Helt in Salem, Oregon, after his mother told the Oregonian newspaper that Cyrus had given him money to fly home.

Cyrus, 21, opted not to collect the Video of the Year award on Sunday for her hit "Wrecking Ball" and instead sent Helt in her place as a way to draw awareness to youth homelessness.

Helt has had a warrant for his arrest on a probation violation for criminal trespass since November 2011 after he failed to report and comply with probation supervision, Polk County Director of Community Corrections Martin Silbernagel said.

Helt's mother, Linda Helt, told the Oregonian that her son had moved to Los Angeles a few years ago and had been homeless at times.

Court records indicate Helt was arrested in 2010 for criminal mischief and criminal trespass, while a burglary charge was dismissed. He was arrested twice in 2011 for probation violations, according to records.

Cyrus defended Helt and accused the media of ignoring the issue of youth homelessness in favor of his legal issues.

"I hope that this can be the start of a national conversation about youth homelessness and how to end it," Cyrus wrote on Twitter, adding: "While they obsesses over one homeless mans legal issue, lets help the other 1.6 million homeless youth." **REUTERS**

Quoted

"I've cleaned your hotels rooms, I've been an extra in your movies, I've been an extra in your life. ... Though I may have been invisible to you in the streets, I have many of the same dreams that brought many of you here tonight." Helt said at the VMAs

Lawsuit

Grand Theft Auto maker says Lohan sued to get attention

The maker of the popular Grand Theft Auto video games said Lindsay Lohan's lawsuit accusing it of basing a character on her without permission is frivolous and an effort by the actress to attract attention.

In papers made public this week in a New York state court in Manhattan, Take-Two Interactive Software Inc. called Lohan's claim "so legally meritless that it lacks any good-faith basis and can only have been filed for publicity purposes."

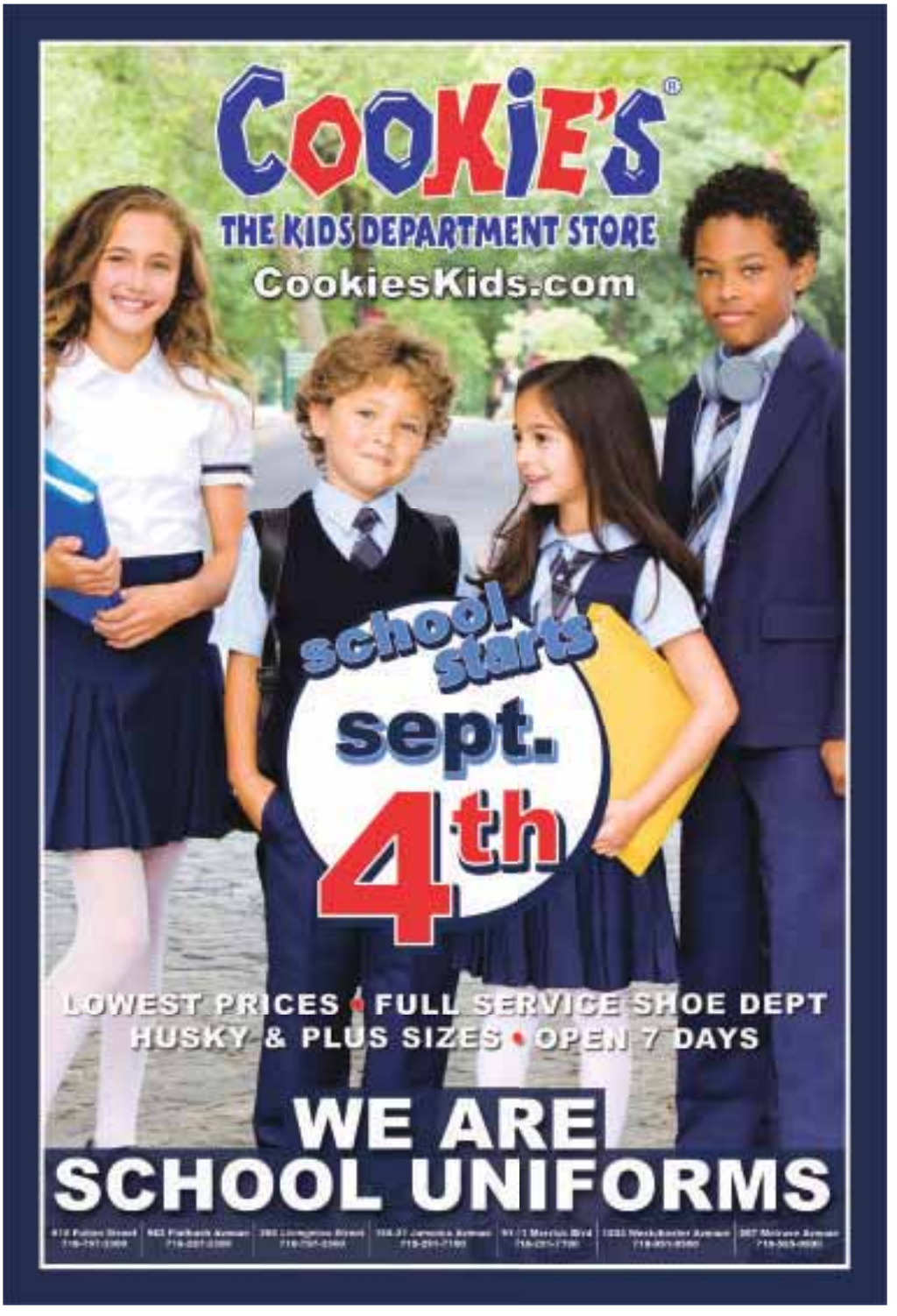
LOHAN / GETTY IMAGES

Take-Two wants to dismiss the July 1 lawsuit and have Lohan pay its legal fees.

A lawyer for Lohan did not immediately respond on Wednesday to requests for comment.

The 28-year-old "Mean Girls" star accused Take-Two and its Rockstar Games unit of basing the Lacey Jonas character in "Grand Theft Auto V" on her.

She said Jonas had a similar voice, image and clothing, and was also chased by paparazzi, and that "multiple people" had noticed a resemblance. Lohan's lawsuit seeks unspecified damages. **REUTERS**



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THE SIMMERING SUMMER

Opinion

TOM FOREMAN

POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT FOR CNN

My wife went on a trip this week, and I had to take her to the airport so early in the morning that I assumed she was part of some secret mission to kill a terrorist.

"Play nice with the other Navy Seals," I said as I dropped her at the curb.

"You're hilarious," she deadpanned. "You know who else is off this week?"

"Who?"

"The mailman," she smirked, hoisting her bag.

Spousal travel aside, D.C. can be surprisingly quiet in the summer with everyone who is anyone jetting away to other places. The president takes off for family time, golfing and possibly working off some lingering bitterness about Hillary Clinton's book. Members of Congress go home to check in with voters, work their districts for donors and eat barbecue. Lobbyists with nothing else to do sit around Dupont Circle watching the chess players while their suits sag in the heat. And we media types skulk around complaining about the lack of action.

Of course, this won't last. If history is any guide, at least one of those absent members of Congress is at this very moment getting into some kind of trouble with Twitter, bribery and an escort service, or possibly all three. The president has managed to keep his stew pot of crises on a low boil, but the heat is undeniably turning up. Within weeks, D.C. will be shuddering amid the thunderclaps of the midterm elections. And pretty soon Capitol Hill, like schools all across the land, will be filled once again with shouting, pushing, shoving, the discovery of new friendships and renewal of old rivalries.

In short, don't expect anything to have changed.

We'll see the same vicious attack ads scrawled like graffiti on a bathroom wall, we'll hear the same unfounded rumors hurled like spitballs, and we media folks will raise the never-changing chorus of autumn: Why must government be this way?

So perhaps we should all enjoy the last, lazy sips of summer while we can. That's what I'm going to do. I mean, after I pick up my wife at the airport — and the mail.

CNN=POLITICS

Supreme Court

Gay marriage advocates to urge court to strike down ban

In a bold legal move that few litigants try, gay marriage advocates plan to urge the U.S. Supreme Court in three pending cases across the country to decide once and for all whether states can ban same-sex unions.

Gay and lesbian plaintiffs won before appeals courts in cases involving bans in Virginia, Utah and Oklahoma, and lawyers for those states have already asked the justices to take up their appeals. Lawyers defending the bans contend that the U.S. Constitution gives the states the role of defining marriage.

In what is a relatively unusual strategy, all three sets of challengers have said they want the justices to review the lower court rulings, even though those decisions favored their side by striking down individual state bans.

The parties that won in lower courts do not usually seek review. It is seen as a sign of the plaintiffs' optimism that the justices would side with them that they are joining the appeals.

They will argue that all state marriage bans violate the Constitution's guarantee of equal protection under the law.

One set of plaintiffs in the Virginia case and the challengers in the Oklahoma case filed court papers pressing that point on Wednesday.

REUTERS

COURT PAPERS IN THE UTAH CASE ARE EXPECTED WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

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From Texas, where everything is bigger: The 99-pack of beer

Austin Beerworks plans to put its first 99-pack on store shelves this week. / AUSTIN BEERWORKS TWITTER

Distribution. The company plans to ship about 20 of the massive packs a week.

Beer packaging has just gotten a lot bigger in Texas, where a small brewery is launching a 99-pack of its Peacemaker ale.

The 7-foot pack consists of three rows of 33 cans that tip the scales at 82 pounds and will likely have a retail price of about $99.

"We made it at first as a joke," said Michael Graham, co-founder of the Austin-based craft brewery. But it seems a lot of people are taking it seriously.

Despite the fact that the product is not an easy fit for store shelves, interest has been high among retailers to stock the 99-packs, which are too big for home refrigerators but designed so that once a pack is opened, the beer can be covered in ice. REUTERS

Quoted

"You might want to share this with about 33 of your friends."
Michael Graham, co-founder

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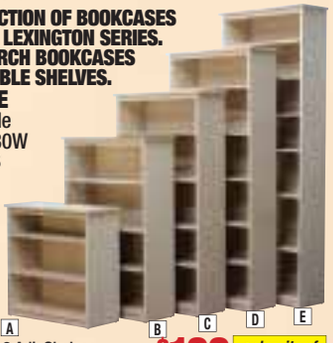

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Heart trumps mind. True stories don't make us feel any sadder

When you need a good cry, do you reach for the movie that's "based on a true story"? Science says you're giving your brain far too much credit.

According to a new study published in the Journal of Consumer Research, it doesn't matter whether the story is inspired by actual events or purely fictional once you've made an emotional investment.

The reverse — going for a novel over a memoir to avoid feeling sad — is also a false assumption, according to the authors from Brandeis and New York universities.

"Consumers may choose to read a tragic fictional story because they assume that knowing it was fictional would make them less sad than reading a less dramatic but true story," they write. "However, the fictional nature does not alter the impact of the tragic story, leaving them more emotionally distraught than if they had read the true story instead."

The only beneficiaries of this self-delusion, the researchers write, are publishers and movie studios willing to back a project simply because it's based on a true story. "However, our results suggest that while emphasizing realism may increase sales, it does not necessarily increase satisfaction," the authors say. **EVA KIS**

Don't pretend "The Hunger Games" didn't tug your heartstrings, despite being based on novels. / MURRAY CLOSE

Quoted

"Our results suggest that while emphasizing realism may increase sales, it does not necessarily increase satisfaction."

A new study published in the Journal of Consumer Research

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2 CULTURE

Who won't see it?

Nov. 21

It's some movie about Jennifer Lawrence doing something, so there's that. But it might even be OK. After a bumpy first, the second 'Hunger Games' series got really interesting and even addictive — and then it stopped, almost mid-sentence, and told you it would see you in a year. This first part of part three will do the same — but it does feature the late Philip Seymour Hoffman.

Summer leaves and movies get good again

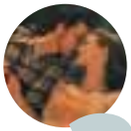
"Guardians of the Galaxy" aside, it's been a brutal August at the multiplexes — not a very happy summer overall, neither for audiences nor for the people hoping to make money off them. The fall is traditionally the time when we turn our brains back on and soak up serious and award-gobbling fare. And that's here already, amid the usual piles of sequels, remakes and rehashes. Here are 10 that really stand out. **MATT PRIGGE**

It's not clear what exactly is going on here between Michael Keaton and Edward Norton in the comedy "Birdman." / FOX SEARCHLIGHT

1 'Birdman'

Oct. 17

Michael Keaton plays the former star of a superhero movie struggling to intereact with an all-star cast. This struggle potentially includes old-timey boxing with Edward Norton in his undies. The usually more somber Alejandro Gutierrez Inarritu ("Babel") directs this prickly comedy, which was made to look like it was done in one take.



2 'The Disappearance of Eleanor Rigby'

Sept. 12

An experimental narrative that will take you three movies and five hours to watch and has nothing much to do with The Beatles, this drama examines a couple's breakup from her side, his side and then the two together. That the couple is Jessica Chastain and James McAvoy (with assists from Viola Davis, Ciaran Hinds, William Hurt and Isabelle Huppert) should make the prospect easier to accept.

3 'Gone Girl'

Oct. 3

Author Gillian Flynn herself adapts her twisty page-turner about an ex-journalist (Ben Affleck) suspected of killing his MIA wife (Rosamund Pike). Much more exciting, it was directed by David Fincher, who may have a chance to really indulge in his comedic side. Then again, this could be another of Fincher's immaculately made adaptations of books fathoms beneath him (like "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo"). After all, the novel is really only great in its first half.

"Dear White People" / ASHLEY NGUYEN

4 'Dear White People'

Oct. 17

Racial relations are satirized in this well-titled indie about four black kids at an Ivy League school who are nonplussed to discover there's an African-American-themed party thrown by white students.

5 'Listen Up Philip'

Oct. 17

Jason Schwartzman plays a cranky, jerkish novelist with a very patient girlfriend (Elisabeth Moss) in the latest from Alex Ross Perry, filmmaker of the delightfully grouchy and rough "The Color Wheel."

"Listen Up Phillip" / TRIBECA FILM

6 'Fury'

Oct. 17

Brad Pitt leads a crack team on a quest to kill Nazis during WWII. (Wait, didn't this already happen five years ago?) And yet despite the "Inglourious Basterds"-y premise, this is a different beast, and not only because it features Shia LaBeouf. This will surely keep things closer to real life than Quentin Tarantino's alternate world fantasy. Then again, Pitt doesn't tend to do his best work when playing serious. He's best at comedy, e.g. his Foghorn Leghorn "Basterds" accent.

7 'Interstellar'

Nov. 7

The combination of Matthew McConaughey and Christopher Nolan ought to blow up heads everywhere. Here, they go to space and enter a wormhole for reasons that are being kept fairly close to the chest. Despite the hyper-praise and hyper-criticism Nolan receives, he's an unquestionably ambitious filmmaker who will surely give us something more than a serious twist on "The Black Hole." Then again, Nolan can't do emotion as well as he does smarts.

8 'Foxcatcher'

Nov. 14

This acclaimed drama starring Steve Carell, Channing Tatum and Mark Ruffalo tells the story of the John du Pont murder, in which a paranoid schizophrenic rich kid (Steve Carell) killed an Olympic athlete. Director Bennett Miller is hot off the cool-tempered "Moneyball," while both Carell and Tatum are both due to show off their serious chops. Of course, Miller also made the naggingly reductive and self-satisfied "Capote."

9 'Inherent Vice'

Dec. 12

No stranger to difficult projects, Paul Thomas Anderson takes on Thomas Pynchon, albeit one of the reclusive author's more accessible works, with Joaquin Phoenix as a P.I. looking for his ex's boyfriend. And did we mention the bewildering big-time supporting cast includes not just Owen Wilson and Benicio Del Toro, but also Martin Short, Joanna Newsom and Jeannie Berlin? That's icing on the cake right there.

10 'Mr. Turner'

Dec. 19

Filmmaker Mike Leigh ("Topsy-Turvy") returns to the past once more for this study of J.M.W. Turner (Timothy Spall), a 19th century sea and landscape painter called "the painter of light" well before Thomas Kinkade actually trademarked the term. Turner wasn't as horrible a person as Kinkade was, but he was grouchy, stubborn, neglected his daughters, took advantage of his adoring maid and spoke largely in musical grunts.

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Everything old is new(ish) again

Here are the season's sequels, remakes, rehashes, comic book movies, etc. **MATT PRIGGE**

Jim Carrey and Jeff Daniels act 20 years younger. / HOPPER STONE

"Exodus" is "The Ten Commandments" redux. / KERRY BROWN

Bilbo Baggins (Martin Freeman) looks exhausted. / WARNER BROS.

1 'The Equalizer'

Sept. 26
Type: Movie of a TV show

The '80s show about a mysterious ex-intelligence officer who kills criminals is back, now with Denzel Washington fighting a Russian sex ring. But this is less about nostalgia for a show not too many may remember well than about watching Denzel Washington hurt people again.

2 'Left Behind'

Oct. 3
Type: Remake

Oscar-winner and sometime genius Nicolas Cage stars in a modestly budgeted adaptation of Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins' series about what happens after the Christian rapture. Of course, there already was a cheap film series about these awful books. They had Kirk Cameron. At least Cage will freak out.

3 'Big Hero 6'

Nov. 7
Type: Comic book movie

Instead of going the usual live-action route, the latest Marvel film is actually a cartoon about a young inventor and the giant robot he created to fight crime. The trailers suggest a comics movie that prefers deadpan comedy — including much patient slow burn humor — to thrills.

4 'Dumb and Dumber To'

Nov. 14
Type: Really belated sequel

Holy crap, "Dumb and Dumber" came out 20 years ago? On the one hand, Carrey hasn't done his rubber-faced shtick in awhile. On the other, the trailer suggests they wearily revive a lot of gags from the first. And again: "D&D" was 20 years ago?!

5 'Horrible Bosses 2'

Nov. 26
Type: Unnecessary sequel

It seemed like its own self-contained narrative, but the first one — about three friends (Jason Bateman, Charlie Day and Jason Sudekis) who want to kill their employers — made money, so here's another one, with everyone back but Colin Farrell.

6 'Exodus: Gods and Kings'

Dec. 12
Type: Rehash

The trend of big religious movies gets to the tale of Moses (Christian Bale) leading the Jews from Egypt, done by a director (Ridley Scott) who can think as big as "The Ten Commandments'" Cecil B. DeMille. Then again, Scott also made the surreally dull "Robin Hood."

7 'The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies'

Dec. 17
Type: Threequel

It's only taken three movies and something like nine hours to adapt a 300-page novel aimed at children, but we did it and now we can go home — after a no doubt prolonged battle with a pretty cool dragon (voiced by Benedict Cumberbatch).

8 'Annie'

Dec. 19
Type: Rehash

That musical about a plucky orphan (Quvenzhane Wallis) who warms the heart of a rich guy actually named Daddy Warbucks (Jamie Foxx) gets modernized. That's not a crime, but what is a crime is having Foxx apparently spend most of the film with a rug over his character's iconic bald melon.

9 'Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb'

Nov. 19
Type: Threequel

What is actually and perhaps regrettably Ben Stiller's highest-grossing franchise returns again, this time sending his night watchman around the globe for some reason. At least there's the late Robin Williams as Teddy Roosevelt.

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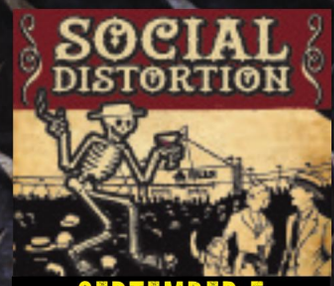

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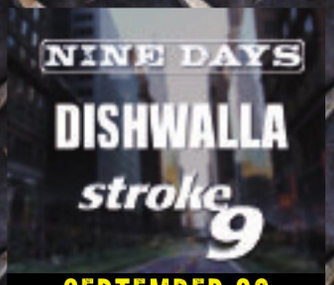

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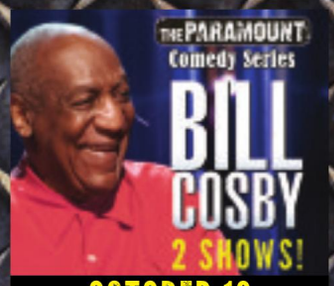

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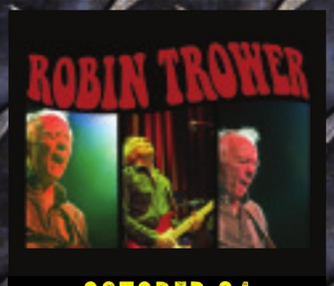

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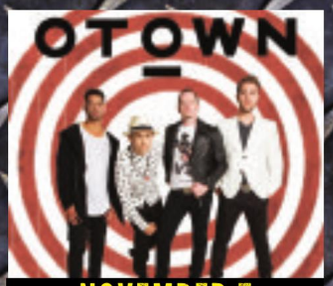

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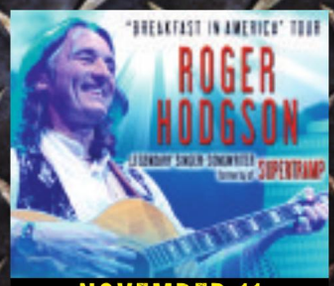

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Spy game. The last James Bond sadly fails to get back in action

Ex-007 Pierce Brosnan returns to the spy game to play a former agent lured out of retirement to do a job that doesn't go nearly as swimmingly as he hoped it would.

Pierce Brosnan is back to walking away from explosions in "The November Man." / ALEKSANDAR LETIC

The lowdown

What "The November Man" seeks to do is clear: It's Brosnan's attempt to return to the glory days of James Bond, to start anew, to give Daniel Craig a run for his money. For the record, he's fine in it — and even dark. His ex-CIA man Peter Devereaux — who gets involved in a plot involving Russian politics — is a man of principle, but also a loose cannon: a boozer whose past is strewn with profound loss, a careerist whose job is to kill, a man who — in the film's second most bizarre scene — severs an innocent woman's femoral artery just to prove a point.

But he's the only thing here that works right. Nothing else does — not even director Roger Donaldson (""No Way Out," "The Bank Job"). Donaldson can't do much with the screenplay's dose of lame action and geopolitics, which are so stupid even this reviewer could follow them.

This is a cut-rate Bond knock-off, and one that makes the mistake of dealing with the Chechen War. A thriller this frivolous should have nothing to do with the grim realities of war trauma and rape and the Hague, all of which shatter the movie's delicate dumbness.

MATT PRIGGE

Review

'The November Man'

Director: Roger Donaldson

Stars: Pierce Brosnan, Olga Kurylenko

Rating: R

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Robin Wright has fun getting scanned in "The Congress." / DRAFTHOUSE FILMS

Live-action/toon. Robin Wright plays herself in a trippy downer

"Waltz with Bashir" director Ari Folman goes Hollywood, sort of, with this satire that turns into a psychedelic animated spectacular. Robin Wright plays a version of Robin Wright: a difficult actress who agrees to sell her digital likeness so that her young screen self can live on forever. But she can never act again.

Review

'The Congress'

Director: Ari Folman

Stars: Robin Wright, Jon Hamm

Rating: NR

● ● ● ● ●

The lowdown

That summary is only the first half; the second is markedly different, with Wright, 20 years later, visiting a drug-induced animated world created by movie conglomerates. It's not a smooth transition, but it does make sense: Folman is positing that the next several logical steps are for entertainment to become not merely a form of escapism but a literal escape from the real, grim world, to which no one need return.

Folman's script is choppy, but it ties together if you do the intellectual work yourself. And it has Wright, who's aged from a pretty princess type into a fascinating screen presence, able — even when animated by others — to convey deep internal conflict and gravity with one deep glance. She's the center of gravity to a film that, once it turns toon, goes Tex Avery mad crossed with "Yellow Submarine" trippy. And yet it's grounded enough to turn into a real bummer. **MATT PRIGGE**

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Crime dramedy. Elmore Leonard gets a movie that really gets him

John Hawkes looks over his kindappee Jennifer Aniston in "Life of Crime." / BARRY WETCHER

Elmore Leonard's "The Switch" becomes this crime dramedy about two ex-cons (John Hawkes and Yasiin Bey, aka Mos Def) who kidnap a rich wife (Jennifer Aniston), whose philandering husband (Tim Robbins) doesn't want to pay up.

The lowdown

Despite similarities to "Ruthless People" — indeed, the source was almost adapted in the 1980s, but scrapped when "People" proved a hit — this is very much in the world of Elmore Leonard. In fact, it's more Elmore Leonard than most Elmore Leonard movies. Filmmakers love to stress the violence and coolness of his novels, but it's the way he actually enjoys the company of blue-collar career criminals — not the swaggering types, but the world-weary, desperate ones — that fuel his work. And it's a side that "Life of Crime" gets more than most.

It doesn't always know how to handle the tone: Robbins and mistress Isla Fisher are definitely in a goofier film than Aniston and Hawkes, who beautifully underplay their tentative almost-romance. But the unsure tone actual works for it: It's funnier than it seems it was meant to be, and also more dangerous. So when comedy and violence break, they hit all the harder. It's a film leading up to a decent punchline, but getting there is rough and weirdly fun. **MATT PRIGGE**

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Drama. Fanning plays Errol Flynn's ladyfriend

Dakota Fanning plays Beverly Aadland, the teenage mistress who cradled Errol Flynn (Kevin Kline) as he died. Susan Sarandon plays Aadland's not-entirely-approving mother.

The lowdown

For a movie about the final fling of one of Hollywood's most debauched superstars, "The Last of Robin Hood" is surprisingly calm and non-sensational. It's almost sympathetic toward the plight of Flynn, portrayed by Kline as a pathetic, decaying horndog using the last of his limited energy to always be "on." Fanning and Sarandon, too, give real performances, playing people who've disappeared too far down the rabbit hole to know they're destroying their lives.

Dakota Fanning plays about five years younger than her true age in "The Last of Robin Hood." / QUANTRELL COLBERT

Review

'The Last of Robin Hood'

Directors: Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland

Stars: Dakota Fanning, Kevin Kline

Rating: R

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And yet all this movie does is withhold judgment. It's more humane than a TV movie, but it still plays like a TV movie. It's one stiff, well-intentioned scene after another, never having the imagination (or maybe the money?) to venture outside a handful of rooms or steer in any conclusion other than the one set upon in the opening scene. Apart from admiring the performances, all there is to do is twiddle your thumbs, waiting for the film to get to its preordained ending.

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The real 'Ghostbuster'

Looking back. On the eve of "Ghostbusters"' theatrical reissue, Ernie Hudson reflects on having his part cut way down.

Ernie Hudson remembers the mechanic who had a tattoo of him on his leg. He was buying a car, and the guy went up to him, pulled up his pant leg and there, from his knee to his ankle, was Hudson as Winston Zeddemore, his character in "Ghostbusters."

"I thought, 'Wow, that's different,'" Hudson recalls.

Still, his memories are not all fond. Looking back on the film, which turned 30 in June and is now being reissued in theaters, Hudson repeatedly calls the film "a mixed blessing." He's by turns grateful for its legacy, his fans and his co-stars — comedy guys welcoming a character actor into the mix — and still hurt at what the studios did to him and what was once a larger role.

For starters, there's the pesky fact that he doesn't enter the film until past the halfway mark. It wasn't always that way.

"Originally Winston came in at the very beginning and was very involved throughout the whole film," Hudson recalls. "Winston was the guy who got slimed at the hotel. Winston was the guy who thought of the Marshmallow Man at the end." When Hudson showed up for the first day, he was shocked by a new script that took out half of his screen time. He wonders if the reason was that the studio couldn't get a big name for the part. Rumor has it Eddie Murphy was attached, though director Ivan Reitman has denied that.

The snubbing didn't stop with the shoot. "I remember driving down Sunset Boulevard and seeing the big billboard for the first time. There were only three guys on there, and Winston wasn't included," he remembers. He was missing from the film's trailer, and when everyone regrouped for 1989's "Ghostbusters II," his role was halved again.

He does admit that feeling like an outsider did help with the role: "Winston is a guy a lot of people, especially average people, related to. He was the guy who wasn't a scientist. He wasn't zany; he gets the job done."

Ernie Hudson poses with "Ghostbusters" memorabilia at the Michigan Comic Con in 2014. / GETTY IMAGES

Remembering Harold Ramis

Hudson is careful to talk about the perks of being in the film, especially working with his three main co-stars. But he does say the late Harold Ramis, who played Dr. Egon Spengler, was his "go-to-guy, the guy who talked me through it. And for that I'll be eternally grateful to him."

MATT PRIGGE
@mattprigge
matt.prigge@metro.us

The fans

Ain't afraid of no ghosts

Hudson still loves the film and has still had a steady career (among plenty of other credits, he was on "Oz" for six seasons), and notes he can't go anywhere without people shouting out "Ghostbusters" lines. But he tries to play it pretty cool. "I called Ray Parker Jr. not too long ago," he says. "I got his machine and he had the 'Ghostbusters' song at the start of the message."

Ernie Hudson wasn't always featured in the promo ads for "Ghostbusters." / SONY PICTURES HOME ENTERTAINMENT

And he doesn't believe in ghosts — or at least he isn't into the paranormal scene, the way Aykroyd is. On the subject of ghost hunting, he says, "Winston has a line that fits me perfectly: 'If there's a steady paycheck in it, I'll believe anything you want.'" That hasn't stopped paranormal enthusiasts from bugging him. "I got invited to a ghost hunt in Mississippi that was supposed to take place at midnight. I was like, 'I'm not going to Mississippi at midnight. I don't think so.'"

Brett and Rennie Sparks are The Handsome Family. / JASON CREPS

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Staying 'True'

When asked to describe The Handsome Family's latest album, Rennie Sparks channels Rust Cohle of the TV show "True Detective."

"A strange problem that humans have is that we keep forgetting that we're animals alive on a planet with other animals," she says. "We think we've left the forest, but we haven't."

Sparks, along with Brett, her husband and collaborator of 20 years, contributed the theme song "Far from Any Road" to the HBO series' opening titles, which merited the series a creative Emmy this week.

Although she originally feared "True Detective" would be "a reality show about cops," Sparks feels a kinship between the series and the song, which she says was inspired by moths feeding on the nighttime blooms of Jimson weed.

"I think they're both obsessed with mystery," she says of the song and the show. "They both reference a kind of mysterious world that's just underneath the radar of normal life."

As lyricist of The Handsome Family, Sparks explores the esoteric, whether in nature or history, most recently resulting in the surreal Aesop's fables that make up their 13th album, "Wilderness."

In a way, Sparks says, an urban audience can better appreciate the magical realism of her lyrics. When she was living in Chicago, she'd write "fervently" about the forest and its creatures: "The more detached we are from nature, the more we need art about nature."

Songwriting is how Sparks stays open-minded. "We only can see what we're willing to believe can exist, so if we can make art that can give us a sense of the bigger possibilities that are available, then we may be able to see more beyond the art," she says.

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It's the pictures that got small

Interview. Whit Stillman says "The Cosmopolitans" is not TV, it's a 26-minute film.

Whit Stillman / GETTY IMAGES

Chloe Sevigny is an American in Paris on "The Cosmopolitans."
AMAZON

Noted independent filmmaker Whit Stillman takes the social worlds he examines in films like "Metropolitan," "Barcelona" and "Damsels in Distress" and transfers it to television — sort of — with an Amazon Studios digital pilot, "The Cosmopolitans." The pilot for the series — chronicling a group of American ex-pats (including Chloe Sevigny) trying to make their way in the Paris social scene — debuts online this weekend, with more to come if all goes well.

What will a Whit Stillman TV show look like?
We always called it a film: "We're doing the film, we're making a film." It's just a film that only happens to run 26 minutes. Hopefully it will be in chapters and we'll get to make at least six more chapters.

Have you planned those out to some extent?
Not exactly. I really love to write from detail to story rather than have a story and then do the details, so I have to kind of give them some version of how it could be before mid-September. But when it really comes down to it, I prefer to start from scratch and just get the characters doing their stuff and going in different directions.

How've you found the experience of working with Amazon?
Well, I've had a long relationship with them. One of the first things that Amazon Studios did, actually, was to option "Metropolitan" for remaking. They were going to allow neophyte filmmakers to use the "Metropolitan" story to adapt to their own uses. I think too many people focus on that sort of class nature of "Metropolitan," when in fact it's really just a story of group dynamics. It's someone from outside coming into a group and the group falling apart or metamorphosizing. That really could be any milieu. But I think there were problems at the Writers Guild, or complications, so that didn't go through.

Has doing this made you consider going into more conventional television after this?
I mean, I really want to do this show and I really want to do the independent projects that I have lined up, so I'm very keen to see this show go forward. But I'm really keen on indie and low-budget films as well. After a horrible sort of 10 years of failure trying to work out of London, things are going better.

Going abroad

What is it about Paris specifically that speaks to you so much?

The thing is, I was there for nine years in a period in which I was newly single and I got involved in this kind of ex-pat social world. And so I had all kinds of experiences and met all kinds of people, and they were pretty funny, pretty interesting people doing pretty crazy things. A lot of potential stories came out of that.

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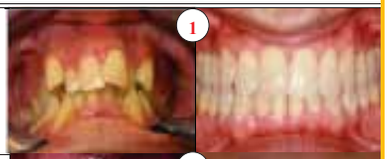
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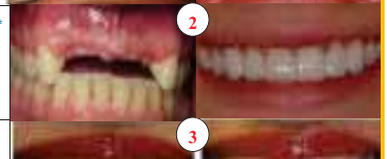
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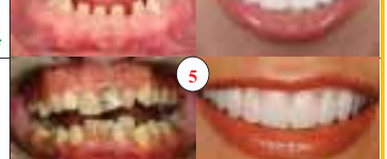
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TV watch list

Twice the Poehler, twice the fun? / RON P. JAFFE, NBC

COMEDY

'Welcome to Sweden'

Catch the final two episodes of the other Poehler's show (little bro Greg). Amy will appear as a kooky version of herself, as will her "Parks and Recreation" co-star Aubrey Plaza. **SEASON FINALE, 9 P.M., NBC**

COMEDY

'Garfunkel and Oates'

Riki and Kate celebrate their 1,000th show, but contend with a heckler. (See page 30 for info on their live show at Irving Plaza, Aug. 30.) **10 P.M., IFC**

MOVIE

'21 Jump Street'

Watch the movie that started the bromance of the century, and see Jonah Hill and Channing Tatum pretend they can pass as high schoolers. **7:30 P.M., FX**

REALITY

'Project Runway'

The contestants take on a high-stress gig: crafting unusual wedding dresses. Dita Von Teese and Chiara Ferragni appear as guest judges. **9 P.M., LIFETIME**

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For his next trick, another daring escape

The "Houdini" miniseries airs for two nights starting on Labor Day at 9 on the History Channel. / COLIN HUTTON

It's magic. Adrien Brody says the true triumph of the Houdini story is his ability to escape his impoverished background.

Harry Houdini may be one of the more quintessentially American heroes. He was a Hungarian immigrant who invented a new kind of a career for himself in America on his way to fame and fortune; the term "escape artist" didn't exist until he created it. It's this triumph over odds that drew Oscar-winner Adrien Brody to take on the role of Houdini in the History channel miniseries biopic "Houdini." Of course, it helped that Brody had a childhood fascination with the man.

"I had aspirations to be a magician as a boy and was in awe of magic and Houdini," admits Brody. As an adult, his appreciation of the man is a little more nuanced, as Brody points out that Houdini represents quite a lot to people in terms of "escaping the confines of poverty and the social constraints of being an immigrant and overcoming anti-Semitism and becoming this heroic, all-American celebrity." But as a kid, and for a lot of kids during Houdini's heyday, Houdini was simply a very brave man, proving "you could defy the laws of nature," as Brody puts it.

That said, Houdini's drive and ambition are nearly obsessive to an adult viewer, something that is on full display in the miniseries. Asked whether there is any parallel between his own drive as an actor and Houdini's endless quest to create bigger and better illusions, Brody says, "I share the drive to a certain extent, but not to impress others." Brody says he thinks Houdini was constantly searching for validation in his work, but that he'd been very fortunate to get that validation at a young age. (Winning an Oscar at 29 will do that for you.)

Brody says he admires Houdini's tenacity in pursuit of his goals, but says it might not be "the most admirable quality." In the miniseries, it's certainly a problematic quality for the man, but Brody says he thinks it's important to show how much hard work went into this unusual success story.

LISA WEIDENFELD
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Quoted

"I had aspirations to be a magician as a boy and was in awe of magic and Houdini." Brody

Magic tricks

Art imitating life

Brody did his best to learn as much as he could about Houdini, saying he consulted with magicians David Copperfield and David Blaine to get their input. He was already partway on the path to being Houdini: "I had a lock pick set as a kid. I know how to breach a lot of devices and articulate locks." But one of Houdini's skills eluded him: The man could manipulate locks with his toes, a skill Brody attempted but was unable to master.

BRODY SAYS HOUDINI KEEPS "COMING UP" IN HIS LIFE. NOT ONLY DID HE IDOLIZE HIM AS A CHILD, BUT HE ONCE PLAYED A CHARACTER NAMED HARRY HOUDINI IN"OXYGEN."

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Audience members experience 360-degree performances at "Wayra." One of the most popular acts involves a swimming pool lowering from overheard. / JACOB KOHL

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Theater. Invigorate your imagination with the newest show from "Fuerza Bruta."

For long-term success, the best shows often reinterpret themselves or add new chapters. If you were a fan of "Fuerza Bruta," the hit Argentinean performance piece in Union Square's Daryl Roth Theatre since 2007 — or if you'd heard about it but never had the chance to go — the new "Wayra" is an opportunity to catch a reimagined version of the show, with all new acts.

"Fuerza Bruta Wayra" means "brute force wind," which becomes literal as the show progresses. The audience starts in an open, dark room (where they'll be standing throughout, and should dress accordingly). Suddenly, percussionists and singers explode into an opening number on a small stage (which knowingly winks at the standard theater experience that the show is about to subvert). A mass of people, tied together in a harness, drops from the darkness and begin swinging overheard. Then the acts of acrobatics, aerial acts and live music start to take place all around and above the viewers. Much of the time, the acts are accompanied by water, mist or massive fans that send flurries of confetti spiraling through the air while viewers find themselves inside of a huge plastic bubble blowing up around them. What was once just an empty room transforms into new shapes and spectacles, invigorating all of the senses.

It's like an immersive Cirque du Soleil. The boundaries between the performers and the patrons aren't gone, but become translucent like the bottom of the unbelievable plastic pool that suspends in midair above your head while mermaid-like tumblers dance, swim and flirt, getting so close you can reach out and almost touch them. It embodies the idea of living in the moment, joyous and curious, like being a child again.

Airplane mode

Just enjoy the show

In the spirit of transparency, audience members are allowed to openly take photographs of the show as it's happening around them. But we suggest putting your phone away and just experiencing "Wayra" as its meant to be — immediate, visceral and powerful enough to transport you to a more primal state, if only for 90 minutes.

Visit **Metro.us** for more images from the show and behind the scenes.

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Fun things to do in NYC this weekend

Events. From festivals to art markets, there's plenty to get you out of the house this weekend.

As tempting as it is to park yourself on the couch this Labor Day weekend for another marathon on Netflix, the holiday was dedicated to the vitality of people like Rosie the Riveter, not Homer Simpson. Pay tribute by taking part in one of the many activities happening around NYC.

West Indian-American Day Carnival

Inspired by Harlem street carnivals in the 1940s, Trinidadian Rufus Goring imported this event to Brooklyn in the '60s. Ever since, the festival has grown to more than 1 million participants. The parade on Monday afternoon is the culmination of several days of events, including six-hour Caribbean Woodstock (Thursday), Brass Fest and Kiddies Carnival (Friday), Steel Band Panorama (Saturday) and Dimanche Gras concert (Sunday). **Aug. 28-Sept. 1; www.wiadcacarnival.org**

Support the arts

Meg Azzoni shows off her water colors for sale at the previous Washing Square Outdoor Art Exhibit. / REBECCA MB. PEARSON

Washington Square Outdoor Art Exhibit

The Great Depression inspired painter Jackson Pollock to take his work into Washington Square Park one spring day in 1931, hoping to eke out the rent for his Greenwich Village studio. The tradition continued throughout the following 80 years, expanding to a twice-a-year happening that includes Labor Day weekend, with exhibitors of fine art, photography, crafts and sculpture. **Aug. 30-31; noon to 6 p.m.; Washington Square Park; www.wsoae.org**

If you bring your own unicycle, you save $5! / KEITH NELSON

One Wheel

NYC Unicycle Festival

"Three days of one-wheel madness" begins Aug. 29 with a 13-mile unicycle ride across Brooklyn by more than 300 riders, ending in at Coney Island Shooting Gallery Annex for the One Wheel stage show. The following two days move to Governors Island, where activities include races, exhibitions and unicycle-modified sports. Even amateurs will have a chance to climb aboard. **One Wheel stage show: Aug. 29; Coney Island Shooting Gallery Annex, 1214 Surf Ave., Coney Island; $10 with unicycle, $15 without; www.nycunifest.com**

14th annual New York International Salsa Congress

"If the streets don't get you, then the salsa will" declares the 14th annual New York International Salsa Congress. The four-day, five-night dance and music festival mixes more than 45 workshops and 90 performances to inspire appreciation for Latin music, dance and culture. With 25,000 square feet of dance space at the Hilton New York, there's room enough for all. **Aug. 27-Sept. 1; New York Hilton Midtown; 1335 Ave. of the Americas; 212-586-7000; $25+; www.nycsalsacongress.com**

MIKE DUNPHY
@metronewyork
letters@metro.us

Onstage

Kate Micucci, left, and Riki Lindhome are Garfunkel and Oates. GETTY IMAGES

Garfunkel and Oates at Irving Plaza

Comedy duo and professional "second bananas" Garfunkel and Oates ride their wave of success to the top of the marquis at Irving Plaza. As part of the 14-city tour, the two actress/singer/comedians, Riki Lindhome and Kate Micucci, plan an epic show that combines popular bits with new material (and songs like "Sex with Ducks"). **Saturday, 7 p.m.; 17 Irving Place; $33.50; ages 18+; www.venue.irvingplaza.com**

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Justin Bieber shares his insightful thoughts on American laws

Justin Bieber has probably had better weeks — I mean, I'm just guessing here. First, he tries taking Selena Gomez out for a nice night at arcade funhouse Dave & Buster's — because of course he would — but he can't even enjoy a game of "Need for Speed" since a fan tries to snap some cellphone pictures of the pair, sending Bieber into a Wolverine-style rage. Bieber reportedly lunged at the man, grabbing for his phone, but was thwarted by his own security guards before he could make contact. (Do they get a bonus every time they have to stop Bieber from starting a fight he can't win?) The police were called, Bieber hit the skids and now he's being investigated for attempted robbery, theft and battery, since the fan — whom I'm starting to think isn't such a fan after all — is looking to press charges, according to TMZ. It's probably nothing really worth worrying about, except Bieber is still on probation for egging his neighbor's house. Where was his security detail then, huh?

Justin Bieber's security guards are tasked with keeping him out of fights he can't win. / GC IMAGES

Rodriguez returns to her woman

Her summer fling with Zac Efron behind her, Michelle Rodriguez is reportedly seeking comfort back in the arms of model Cara Delevingne, with whom she split before taking up with Efron, according to Radar Online. "Michelle needed to get away from Zac, and she got away from him by going to New York to see Cara. Michelle missed Cara's company," a source says. "I wouldn't be surprised if Cara and Michelle are hooking up again. Cara is a girl — and it's no secret that Michelle likes that." Buried within this coy, pursed-lipped tale of possibly Sapphic affection comes the suggestion that recently rehabbed Efron might not be behaving himself as much as his publicist would like you to think: "Cara doesn't party [like] Zac does," the source adds. "Part of the reason Michelle and Zac broke up was because she couldn't handle his partying."

MICHELLE RODRIGUEZ
WIREIMAGE

THE WORD

Ned Ehrbar takes on the world of gossip.

NED EHRBAR
@Nedrick
ned.ehrbar@metro.us

JENNIFER ANISTON
GETTY IMAGES

Leave Aniston alone about pregnancy

Jennifer Aniston is sick and tired of everyone asking about her marriage and children plans. "It is such an issue of, like, 'Are you married yet? Are you going to have your babies yet?' It's just constant. It's like, I don't know!" she told Carson Daly during a "Today" show interview. "I've birthed a lot of things and feel like I've mothered many things, and I don't think it's fair to put that pressure on people."

Would You Like to Draw Nearer to God?

"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse you hands, sinners; and purify your hearts, you doubleminded

James 4:8

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Altuzarra brings his sexy lady to a Target near you

Designer collaboration.
The latest high-low pairing you'll want to line up for.

Hotshot designer Joseph Altuzarra has fast become fashion's wunderkind. Since launching his label in 2008, he's picked up numerous awards for his sexy-yet-wearable designs, including his recent big win: the 2014 CFDA Womenswear Designer of the Year Award.

To top things off, he's been chosen by Target for the retailer's latest designer partnership. Launching globally Sept. 14, the collaboration will allow the 31-year-old to expand his brand beyond his coterie of fashion insiders.

But don't expect Altuzarra to shy away from his signature sex appeal just because you can pick up some baby food two aisles over. The limited-edition collection highlights the sexy, subversive and confident ethos of his main line. "We're focused on a very adult and seductive way of dressing," he says in the campaign video for the line.

Here are three looks that can take you from a job interview or board meeting straight to your hot evening rendezvous.

TINA CHADHA
@TinaatMetro
tina.chadha@metro.us

By the numbers

$18-$90

In the nearly 50-piece collection, ranging in price from $18 to $90, you'll find pencil skirts with slits up to there, sheer python fabrics and lots of moody black. Sexiness aside, there's also a professional, boss-lady feel to the belted knee-length ensembles.

PLUS

One more for your outdoor soiree

Oh Joy! For Target

Lantern, $4, Target.com

Labor Day essentials

Whether you're soaking up the sun on the beach or barbecuing in the park, here are some must-haves for your end-of-summer bash. **TINA CHADHA**

1

Topshop
Tassel hem dress, $68, Topshop.com

2

Crate and Barrel
Flag football game set, $119.95, Crateandbarrel.com

3

Ross & Brown
Sunglasses, $130, www.rossandbrown.com

4

Hillhouse Naturals
Mosquito repellent candle, $19, Hillhousenaturals.com

5

Terrain
Vintage ice bucket, $28, Shopterrain.com

6

Sunny Life
Beach Radio, $49, Anthropologie.com

10 Types of people you meet online

Looking for love? According to PlentyofFish.com, here are the most common dating profiles.

Women

The Sobber

1 She probably really isn't ready to date yet, but is tentatively giving online dating a try.

Sample profile quote: Look for references to an ex-boyfriend and questions like "Are there any good guys out there?"

The Hot Non-Responder

2 This dater is not looking for a steady commitment — she wants to have some fun.

Sample profile quote: "My friends made me sign up for this" — insinuating that she really doesn't want to be online.

Carmen Sandiego

3 Like her namesake, this mystery woman is hard to pin down.

Sample profile quote: Carmen doesn't have one, as she doesn't share much about herself online.

The "Woo!" Girl

4 You'll recognize the "Woo!" immediately — she's the one pictured with three of her best friends at a bar in her profile photo.

Identifying characteristic: She's outgoing, flirty and spontaneous.

Online daters tend to fall into recognizable patterns, says one dating site. / GOODSHOOT

The Queen Bee

5 This one is self-explanatory. She's used to being at the center of attention.

How you can impress her: Think of an interesting, unconventional first date.

Men

The World Traveler

6 This amateur explorer has crossed the globe several times — and won't hesitate to mention it.

Typical profile photo: It's set in an exotic locale most people only know of from watching the Travel Channel.

The Relic

7 You know the "half your age plus 7" rule? This guy has never heard of it.

The Spammer

8 He messages and likes with abandon.

Sample message: Beware of messages that seem like they've been copied and pasted to 10 other profiles.

The Dog Whisperer

9 As you might have guessed, his profile frequently mentions his canine companions.

The Hopeful Romantic

10 He is probably divorced, but that hasn't stopped him from looking for true love.

Profile characteristics: He likes the words "'loyal," "compassionate" and "commitment."

LAKSHMI GANDHI
@LakshmiGandhi
lakshmi.gandhi@metro.us

Tech alert

New app puts women in charge

Online dating can be brutal, especially for single women.

"I just started looking [at online dating options] and very quickly realized how many things are out there and how immediately my 'creepy meter' went up," tech entrepreneur Susie Lee told CNN in a recent interview.

And so Siren — the new app created by Lee and co-founder Katrina Hess — was born. The two say they wanted to create an app that puts women in charge of their online experience.

Once they have registered and taken an in-app photo, female users are guided to Siren's "question of the day" and will be able to see all of the men who answer the query. If she likes a particular answer, she can allow the man to see her profile or save his profile to look at later.

"You're trying to make strangers less strange," said Lee.

LAKSHMI GANDHI

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What women's desires tell us about love today

Real-world love advice

CHARLES J. ORLANDO

www.theproblemismen.com

Charles J. Orlando is a relationship expert and author of the best-selling book series "The Problem with Women ... Is Men." Find out more about him on his website, or visit him on Facebook for real-world love advice.

Austrian neurologist and father of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud made this famous statement: "The great question that has never been answered, and which I have not yet been able to answer, despite my 30 years of research into the feminine soul is, 'What does a woman want?'" If you ask a woman what she wants, her answer will be entirely dependent on highly individualized circumstances: current wants, needs, age, family situation, hormonal status and life experience.

The good news for men, however, is that there are some consistencies. Recent research shows that the top five "wants" of women are, in descending order:

For exclusive commentary, visit **Metro.us/blogs.**

5 Good income
But this isn't about cash or material possessions. This is really about one thing: security.

4 Physical attractiveness
You can't get away from what makes the other person want/desire you.

3 Intelligence
Mental stimulation and compatibility are critical.

2 Leadership
Women want equality in a relationship, to be sure. But they also want a man to take the lead — in and out of the bedroom.

1 Love
As social, nurturing creatures, this always tops her list.

But much of this is very general and is still rooted in primal mating rituals. After a relationship has grown, some of the mystery disappears. After surveying and connecting with thousands of women on Facebook, they are spilling the beans on what they want from the men in their lives. This is by no means a complete list, but it has much to be considered.

Down: *Women think that their imperfections (stretch marks, extra pounds) make them unattractive ...*

Up: *Five hundred men interviewed said that if they are really into her, none of those things matter!*

Women want:

- their partner to talk with them, not at them.
- to vent and discuss their thoughts without a man automatically trying to solve their problems.
- a man to always remember that he's a gentleman throughout a relationship, not just when first dating.

Above all, the most common response has been that women want men to remember that they have their own wants, needs and desires. Women aren't just wives, girlfriends and/or mothers — they are women who want to feel desired as women.

What we're into this week ...

1 *To those women who say, "All men are jerks!" — I think what you mean is that all the men YOU have been involved with are jerks. All men are NOT the same.*

2 *Some couples can get past an act of infidelity, with some saying that it even made their relationship stronger and more honest. Could you get past an affair?*

3 *There's a very good reason "Fifty Shades of Grey" is a smash hit ... and men should be paying attention.*

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If Downtown Momentum isn't available in this edition of your Metro, you can find it in select office buildings around Lower Manhattan or online at **SpecialPublications.Metro.us**

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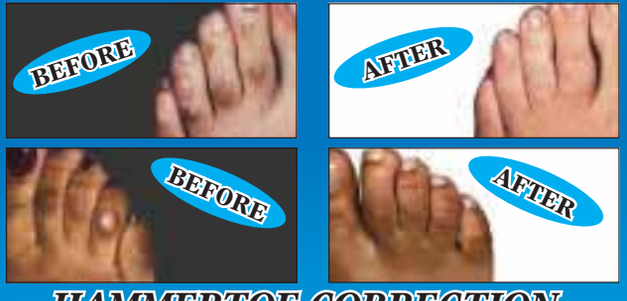

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Last days of summer

MoMA's weekly outdoor dance party Warm Up wraps up next weekend. / CHARLES ROUSSEL

Make it count.
Labor Day marks the end of warm-weather idyll.

Soon, it'll be time for wool accessories and knee-high boots. Even the Pumpkin Spice Latte has already arrived — but we still have one last weekend of summer.

Food & drink

Savor the beach at Maison Premiere. / NOAH FECKS

What's more decadent than brunch on a Monday? Grab a sidewalk table at **Amigos** (2888 Broadway) and get comfortable for the bottomless boozy brunch. The pig roast returns at **Sotto 13** (140 W. 13th St.), with Italian and Puerto Rican dishes ready to sop up the West Village spot's unlimited brunch cocktails ($29) all weekend starting at 11 a.m. On the Upper East Side, unlimited brunch ($39) at **Maya** (1191 First Ave.) has not only bottomless drinks but food, too, with small plates like chorizo-potato hash sliders and Mexican-style French toast.

If you wish you had sand between your toes, find a taste of the shoreline at Brooklyn's oyster-focused **Maison Premiere** (298 Bedford Ave.), where doors open at noon Monday for specials and live music in addition to the restaurant's usual seafood-and-cocktails fare.

As summer Fridays at **Saxon + Parole** (316 Bowery) end, get your final 3 Martini Lunch: mini carafes of the cocktail alongside a three-tier tower of seafood ($30). On the terrace, live bluegrass music begins at 2 p.m.

Things to do

The outdoor movie season isn't over yet. At **South Street Seaport**, you can still catch Ryan Gosling in a rare role that requires neither fast driving nor shooting in "Crazy, Stupid, Love." on Saturday. Or if you do like that sort of thing, "Skyfall" screens Sunday. There's also "The Lego Movie" on Friday (Westerleigh Park, Staten Island) and "Despicable Me 2" on Saturday (Brower Park, Brooklyn). All movies start at 8 p.m.

Get your dancing in during the second-to-last Saturday for **Warm Up at MoMA PS1** with electronic music talent from London, Berlin and NYC keeping the arty party going. (22-25 Jackson Avenue, Long Island City, 3-9 p.m., $18 advance, $20 door)

When it comes to rooftop parties, to enjoy more than the open air you have to get pretty high up. At **Skyroom** (330 W. 40th St.) every seat has a view of the city skyline, and if you come Sunday there's an open bar from 10-11 p.m.

Play two rounds of miniature golf for the meager price of $9 per person on the 36-hole course at **Randall's Island**. Or be a tourist in your own town — the **Central Park Zoo** is open even on Labor Day.

Friday and Saturday beginning at 7 p.m., the **Brooklyn Night Bazaar** (165 Banker St.) becomes an urban carnival of the borough's culinary, musical and creative talent. This weekend's headliners are Single Mothers and No Joy; catch them between rounds of black light ping-pong.

EVA KIS
@thisiskis
eva.kis@metro.us

Seasonal tradition

Sprawl in the park with these treats

Squeeze in one more lazy afternoon with a picnic. Save yourself the cooking by grabbing a **Chelsea Market Basket**. The curated boxes ($45-$142) include a five-borough market tour and a comprehensive savory-sweet spread. Slip in a bottle of summer's wine, **Stemmari's Pinot Grigio** ($9.99), a Sicilian savory variety with notes of magnolia and ripe citrus. Or catch the last seasonal batch of **Sam Adams' Latitude 48 IPA**, made with six types of hops including domestic as well as U.K. and German varieties. (Check out Metro.us for a beer-marinated shrimp recipe!)

CHELSEA MARKET BASKETS PROVIDED

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NY Philharmonic

Free Fridays

The New York Philharmonic announced this week that for its 2014-15 season, young people between the ages of 13 and 26 can attend performances for free. There will be 100 tickets available on a first come, first served basis until an hour before Friday concerts. Tickets are limited to one per person and must be claimed at Avery Fisher Hall. For details, visit www.nyphil.org.

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Stan Sagner writes, "...[the salmon] was paired with coffee-roasted carrots so flavorful that you may never eat the supermarket version again."
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MUSIC

Michael Jackson Video Tribute Birthday Party

Aug. 29, 11:30 p.m.
Brooklyn Bowl
61 Wythe Ave., Williamsburg
$10, 718-963-3369
www.brooklynbowl.com
Stones Throw Records founder Peanut Butter Wolf is on the decks for what would have been the King of Pop's 56th birthday. Come dressed to impress and ready to dance — it's the tribute he deserves.

PARTY

Rub-a-Grub

Aug. 31, 2 p.m.
Do or Dine
1108 Bedford Ave., Bed-Stuy
$15-$30, 718-684-2290
www.doordinebk.com
It's beats meets treats at this backyard party featuring DJ Akalepse and partner in wax Still Life on the decks. Do or Dine chef Justin Warner curates three rounds of food and drinks paired with three DJ sets for a multisensory experience. Drink specials, food specials and tunes all day long.

Max Power's Silly Dance Contest!

Aug. 30, 6 p.m.
Rockaway Beach Surf Club
302 Beach 87th St., Queens
Free, www.rockaway beachsurfclub.com
Can't dance? You've found your people. The silliest booty-shakers will win bar tabs.

FOOD

Munch Around the Village

Scavenger Hunt

Aug. 31, 1 p.m.
Greenwich Village
$24.50, 877-946-4868
www.watsonadventures.com
Do you like hunting for food, just not the kind with weapons? There's no survival experience necessary to explore Greenwich Village while tracking down some of the best pizza, kebabs, cheese, cannolis, gelato and peanut butter in the city, sprinkled with stops at classic filming locations.

PERFORMING ARTS

The Last Days of Folly

Sept. 3, 5:30 p.m.
Madison Square Park
Free, 212-538-1884
www.madisonsquarepark.org
Before they leave the park on Sept. 7, the three outsize sculptures known as "Folly" will get quite a sendoff. The Broque Baroque Suite, a lantern dance based on an epic Hindu poem, Sofia Coppola choreographing a ballet troupe and more. Amid the performances will be a fashion show with outfits created by prestigious designers like Zac Posen and Cynthia Crowley. **JAY HONSTETTER**

MUSIC

The Electric Zoo Festival

Aug. 29-31, 1 p.m.
Randall's Island Park
$99-$369
www.electriczoofestival.com
The electronic music celebration returns for a fifth year, with 150,000 attendees expected. David Guetta, A-Trak, Knife Party and Dash Berlin are just some of the 125 acts performing rain or shine.

JORDAN LOYD

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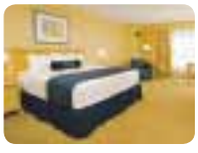
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Horoscope

♍ Virgo | Aug. 23-Sept. 22. If you are ambivalent about your current career, look into other options. It's never too late to change your direction.

♎ Libra | Sept. 23-Oct. 22. You may be feeling uncertain about a situation at work. If quick action isn't necessary, focus on doing the best job possible.

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23-Nov. 21. Don't let anyone push you to make a hasty decision. Take all the time you need to investigate the details of a pending financial or medical matter.

♐ Sagittarius | Nov. 22-Dec. 21. Your popularity is growing within your peer group. Don't take any of your relationships for granted.

♑ Capricorn | Dec. 22-Jan. 20. Don't listen to someone who is cynical. Once you have decided the best route, keep moving forward.

♒ Aquarius | Jan. 21-Feb. 18. Make sure that everyone around you is clear about your intentions. Your insight will inspire others to follow you, giving you the support required.

♓ Pisces | Feb. 19-March 20. You are a dependable and dedicated person, but it's also important to take time to replenish and rejuvenate. Don't take on demands.

♈ Aries | March 21-April 20. A hasty decision could turn out badly. Before you proceed, check to see if someone with ulterior motives has misled you.

♉ Taurus | April 21-May 21. Procrastination will be your downfall. You have decided on your direction, so don't waste time second-guessing your moves. T

♊ Gemini | May 22-June 20. You don't have to blow your budget to enjoy some lively fun. Love is knocking at your door. Make plans.

♋ Cancer | June 21-July 22. Your opponents will not give an inch. Instead of stepping into the spotlight where it is easy for others to criticize your actions, keep your ideas quiet.

♌ Leo | July 23-Aug. 22. Good advice is useless if you don't take it. Listen to the experts to discover a way to overcome anything you face. A delay could cause trouble. EUGENIA LAST

Sudoku: Easy and hard

		5	7		1			8
	9	2	3			1	7	5
				5	4			6
	5	3		9		7	4	
1			6	3				
4	1	7			5	8	2	
9			8		2	4		

	6			4		7		8
	5				1			
	4	1		2		6		5
1					4			
3		4				2		9
			3					1
6		9		7		1	4	
			1				7	
5		7		3			8	

How to play
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Letters

Column is no place for opinions

Re: 'Companies revolutionizing the world' (Metro, Aug. 26)
I'm starting to get the impression that finance columnist Tim Sykes is nothing but a rich, arrogant conservative JERK!! He BRAGS in his articles about his riches and success (we should all be so fortunate). First of all, he never grew up really poor. He grew up middle-class in Connecticut so he had longer bootstraps than the rest of us to pull himself up!! I am particularly getting a little put off by his cheap, exaggerated comments against the president. He was outright deceiving and truth-spinning in this Tuesday's article when he painted a HORRIBLE distortion of President Obama. Sykes said the president condemned the beheading of journalist James Foley and then went right ahead to play a game of golf. The president was NOT that cold cut-and-dry about James Foley's TRAGIC death!

Mr. Sykes, you need to keep your political thoughts to yourself and stick to your personal finance column and please upload another picture of yourself; that snide little smirk you're wearing in that photo is hardly flattering!
ADAM THOMPSON, VIA EMAIL

letters@metro.us
Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words. Metro reserves the right to edit all letters. Please include your name and contact info.

Visit us online at **Metro.us.**
Use your smartphone to find today's crossword answers! Download and open the Blippar app on your smartphone and hold the screen over the puzzle.

Crossword

Across
1 Fiber-rich grain
4 Shaft of lightning
8 Crossed a creek
13 Ricelike pasta
14 D'Artagnan prop
15 Relish tray item
16 Low voice
17 Hideout
18 Poe's visitor
19 Cultivate
20 Hope's hope
22 Clears, as a drain
24 Bouquet
25 Acid rain watchdog
26 Nukes
28 Marsupial pocket
31 Bays
34 Paper toy
35 Course of events
36 Done with
37 2.2-pound units
38 Flow slowly
39 Galley mover
40 Beatles film
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43 Dallas NBAers
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47 Trailers
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55 Hard seat
56 Start the day
57 Past due
58 Flaky mineral
59 Brings down the house
60 Post-kindergarten
61 Union flouter
62 Keenly attentive
63 Garden intruder
64 Kitchen meas.

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1 Synthetic fabric
2 Cortes foe
3 Likewise
4 Kind of whale
5 Iridescent stones
6 Erik the Red's son
7 Garr or Hatcher
8 Planets
9 Historic shrine
10 Pastime
11 Deadlocked
12 Bumper mishap
13 Molokai neighbor
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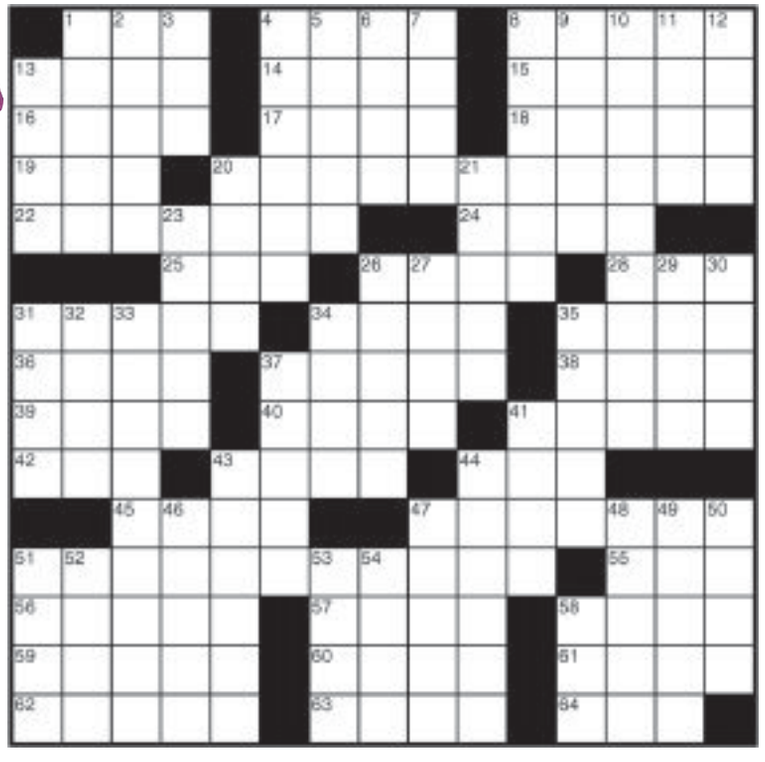
58 Santa Fe hrs.

Wednesday's answer



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3 Stories to watch as Jets play the Eagles

NFL. The Jets have one game left, at Philadelphia on Thursday, to tune up for the regular season opener.

A win on Thursday night against the Eagles would give the Jets a 3-1 record and just their second-ever winning preseason under head coach Rex Ryan. It would also give them some momentum heading into the regular season with a tough slate of games to open the campaign.

Metro looks at three storylines to watch as the Jets face the Eagles on Thursday (7 p.m., CBS2).

KRISTIAN DYER
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1 Vick returns 'home'

After five seasons with the Eagles, Michael Vick left Philadelphia this offseason for the trip up the New Jersey Turnpike to the Jets. Injuries kept him on the sidelines for a good chunk of time last year and the emergence of Nick Foles meant he was no longer needed.

"I had a great run there with a lot of great memories and accomplished some things that can never be taken away from me. I'm ecstatic about that, thankful and very grateful." It wouldn't be surprising to see Vick get the first series just so that the Philadelphia fans can acknowledge him."

To his credit, he's said and done everything right with the Jets so far and hasn't rocked the boat at all.

VICK WILL LIKELY SEE A LITTLE PLAYING TIME IN HIS RETURN TO PHILADELPHIA. GETTY IMAGES

2 Youth energy

The fourth preseason game always means that the young players get a chance to step up and see extended minutes.

It will be interesting to see how second-year offensive lineman Oday Aboushi continues his development at guard as he's taken a step forward in his development.

Rookie quarterback Tajh Boyd will be looking to make the squad, but will need a monumental performance to pass Matt Simms.

Visit **Metro.us** to read more about Stephen Hill being on the bubble.

3 Youth play

Despite being a second-round pick two years ago, it isn't assured wide receiver Stephen Hill will make the roster after another lackluster preseason.

A team source tells Metro that Hill "might have a hard time" making the 53-man squad.

Hill looked good in offseason workouts, but disappears when he puts the pads on. Despite an abundance of natural talent, he just isn't a football player at this point of his development.

But he might be able to salvage a roster spot if he can get open and make some plays Thursday. That's a big if, however, when it comes to Hill.

Last call

Giants vs. Pats: Three things to watch

The Giants wrap up their extended preseason campaign Thursday night by playing host to the Patriots.

Metro takes a look at three things to watch for in the preseason finale (7:30 p.m., NBC4).

1 Still starting
The Giants will still be playing Eli Manning and the first-team offense "15 to 18 plays," according to head coach Tom Coughlin. And yes, he still hopes to see some production from the starters. Manning finally reeled off a good drive at the end of the first half against the Jets last week, but it was all out of the no-huddle. Let's see if they can do it from the base offense against the Pats.

2 Rest for the weary
While Manning will be playing Thursday, his opposite Super Bowl-winning quarterback will not. Tom Brady has reportedly been given the night off by former Giants assistant Bill Belichick.

This year's return to the Giants has been anything but happy for Mario Manningham, right. / GETTY IMAGES

The 37-year-old missed the first preseason game as well, but they apparently aren't worried about rustiness come Week 1.

It does mean Brady won't get to work with his new offensive line, however. Veteran offensive lineman Logan Mankins was traded this week, and won't be protecting Brady for the first time since 2005.

3 Who's the 'Mann'?
The final preseason game always brings competition for the final roster spots. It's unlikely Mario Manningham thought he'd have to be fighting so hard for his position. The Super Bowl hero has been completely absent so far this preseason with just two catches for 22 yards. The ascension of Corey Washington means Manningham is very much on the bubble. MARK OSBORNE

3 SPORTS

Suspension upheld

Gordon gone for season

The NFL upheld the year-long suspension of Browns All-Pro wide receiver Josh Gordon on Wednesday. Gordon will miss the entire season for failing a third drug test for marijuana. He was suspended two games last season for a previous failed drug test, but still led the league in receiving yards. Gordon was arrested for a DUI this summer while he was appealing his suspension.

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Williams leaves wake of talented US women

U.S. Open. Serena Williams has a host of young American girls following in her footsteps on the WTA Tour.

Serena Williams is closing in on 18 career major titles. / ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

It seems only a matter of when, not if, Serena Williams will win her 18th career Grand Slam championship, tying her with Chris Evert and Martina Navratilova for fourth on the all-time women's list.

As the No. 1 seed and two-time defending champion, Williams remains the favorite to win her third straight U.S. Open and sixth overall. Yet 2014 has hardly been a banner year for the 32-year-old, who meets Vania King at about 1 p.m. Thursday in a second-round match.

Williams hasn't advanced past the fourth round at any of the three previous majors, and if she fails to win the Open it will mark the first time in the last four years she hasn't won a Grand Slam event. Only twice since 2006 has Serena gone a full year without winning at least one Grand Slam.

She also went through a bizarre incident at Wimbledon in which she appeared disoriented and withdrew from a doubles match with her sister Venus. She later explained to Sports Illustrated that she wasn't pregnant or under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time.

"I've decided I'm not going to overthink it," Williams said of her struggles this year. "I think I've overthought every grand slam so far this year. It didn't really work out great for me. So worst-case scenario, I'm just going to stay positive and do the best I can. That's all I can do."

While the American men continue to struggle, a slew of young American women who have followed in Williams' wake have advanced to the second round, including 15-year-old CiCi Bellis, the youngest girl to win a match at the U.S. Open since 1996.

In her first-round match Tuesday, Williams dispatched 18-year-old Taylor Townsend of Chicago in straight sets, 6-3, 6-1.

Townsend, like many of the other young American women, African-American and otherwise, grew up idolizing Serena.

"I think that I've learned, number one, that I can play until I'm 30-something years old," Townsend said. "Number two, that just anything is possible."

ADAM ZAGORIA
@AdamZagoria
sports@metro.us

Quoted

"She's paved the way for me and not only African-American girls but girls in general, people in general. Just has changed the game of tennis."

Taylor Townsend on Williams

US Open highlights

AGNIESZKA RADWANSKA
GETTY IMAGES

Following CiCi Bellis' surprise win Tuesday, the upsets continued on the women's side Wednesday.

- The highest-seeded player on either side to lose so far was **Agnieszka Radwanska**, who fell to doubles ace **Peng Shuai**, 3-6, 4-6. The No. 4 seed reached the semis of the Aussie Open earlier this year.
- American **Sloane Stephens'** run in Queens is also over early. The No. 21 seed lost, 7-5, 4-6, 2-6, to Swede **Johanna Larsson**.
- It looked like **Maria Sharapova** might not be long for the tournament either, but the 2006 champ bounced back from a first-set loss to win, 4-6, 6-3, 6-2, against **Alexandra Dulgheru**.
- **Ryan Harrison** became the latest American man to fall by the wayside in Flushing. He was beat by No. 7 seed **Grigor Dimitrov**, 2-6, 6-7 (4-7), 2-6.

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PRESEASON TAKEAWAYS

Bashing the NFL's preseason has become so cliche. Yes, it's true that the scores and stats mean very little. But the way players are used means a ton.

The third set of exhibition games, which went down last weekend, is the dress rehearsal week. We were able to see the first-stringers play an entire half or more, and were therefore able to draw some conclusions about depth charts and regular-season usage:

Gates won't die

Philip Rivers played 19 snaps on Sunday, and Ladarius Green was on the field for just five of them. Antonio Gates started, was the man in single-TE formations and ended up with 17 snaps. So we have some playing time concerns for Green. We also have the same usage concerns as we did in 2013 when the freakish athlete was used as a blocker so often. Green has played 30 snaps with Rivers this preseason, but has only been thrown to three times.

Gates caught just four touchdown passes in 2013. / GETTY IMAGES

'Dre Day

Andre Ellington has a shaky injury history from his days at Clemson and is hovering around 200 pounds. Yet the Cardinals clearly want to use him as their workhorse running back. He stayed on the field for 26-of-29 first-team reps Sunday night, getting the call on all early downs, some third downs and even splitting out wide a few times during the game.

It's the same way he was used in the first two preseason games. If the explosive Ellington can survive, he's a near lock for 300 touches and a bunch of big plays.

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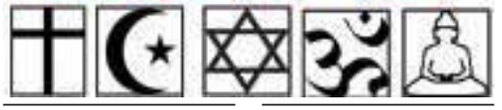

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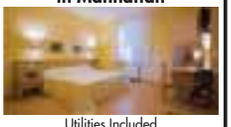
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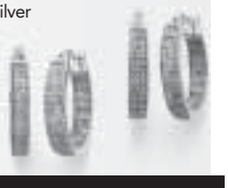

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